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[54] **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATIC INSERTION OF A TELEVISION SIGNAL FROM A REMOTE SOURCE**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A system is provided for inserting selected commercials from a remote source via satellite into pre-cued cable network commercial breaks at targeted regional groupings of local cable headend operators without storage of the commercials at each headend. By sequencing the avails used for insertion among the groupings of headends, by creating plural levels of simultaneity, and by using compression/decompression techniques, a highly efficient use of the satellite per each transponder channel is achieved despite overlap in breaks as between networks; while, at the same time, allowing sufficient time during each break for the local headend operator to insert his own local ads if desired, and to use as well, if desired, the decompression capabilities of the system without the need for the headend to invest in its own.

31 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets